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SUBJECT: JOINT WEEKA No. 41

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MILITARY - Negative

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EXTERNAL - POLITICAL

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1. BERLIN. Soviet press coverage of the talk between Gromyko and the President was brief and non-committal. In the absence of editorial comment, the only evaluation of these talks available to the Soviet public was a TASS report on October 9 which said that Secretary Rusk had stated in a TV interview with Mrs. Roosevelt that Gromyko's call at the White House was conducted in a good and constructive atmosphere.

Attention to the twelfth anniversary of the GDR was considerably heavier than last year. Three major themes emerged in the propaganda on this occasion: Western sentiment favoring recognition of the existence of two German states is rapidly growing; the Rusk-Gromyko talks were the first step in a process which will lead to a peaceful resolution of the Berlin crisis; and Soviet military power is basically responsible for these developments.

Speeches and lectures on the anniversary showed no change in the Soviet position that a separate peace treaty will end Western rights in Berlin, but there were no references to a deadline for concluding a peace treaty "still in this year."

The reported decision of the US to allocate an additional $300,000 to increase RIAS programming and technical capacity was sharply denounced as a provocative gesture which suggested the President was not sincere in meeting with Gromyko on Berlin. The Soviet press also complained of provocations in the form of an alleged FRG decision to send police to West Berlin, and the meeting in Berlin by the "so-called European Parliament."

2. SYRIA. The Soviet Union extended recognition to the Arab Republic of Syria on October 7. Nevertheless, the Soviet press continued to treat events surrounding the Syrian situation with a certain ambivalence. On October 7, for example, Pravda published a TASS despatch from Beirut reporting on the Syrian Communist Party's statement which termed recent events in Syria as a "historical" victory of the Syrian people and which alleged that thousands of patriots were imprisoned as a result of the anti-democratic activities of former authorities. Alongside this report, Pravda carried an account of Nasser's speech of October 5 in which he sharply refuted these charges.

During the course of the week the Soviet press listed the states extending recognition to Syria and also gave prominent attention to Premier Kuzbari's speech calling for a federation of Arab states. At the same time, it was also reported that Khrushchev had received the UAR Ambassador, at the latter's request, on October 9 and that a "friendly" conversation had taken place.

Comment: Thus far, the Soviets appear to have stayed on good terms with the three principal parties in the triangle: Nasser, the new government in Syria, and the Syrian Communist Party.

DECLASSIFIED

3. LAOS. In reporting the agreement of the three princes at Hin Heup that Souvanna Phouma should head a coalition government, the Soviet press failed to exploit the development as a significant milestone on the road to a peaceful settlement of the Laotian conflict. The Soviet press made the point that the important question of what cabinet posts will go the Phoumi-Boun Oum group remains to be settled. Thus the general impression was created for the Soviet public that while there has been some progress toward a peaceful settlement, the Laotian situation can easily deteriorate. The press claimed that responsibility for any deterioration would belong an alleged warmonger faction in the Pentagon, which it says all along has opposed a peaceful settlement. As in previous months, the press ignored the negotiations in Geneva.

4. VISITORS.

Finland. According to the Soviet press, Finnish Army Chief, General A. S. SIMELIUS, arrived in Moscow on October 10 enroute to a vacation in Sochi. While in Moscow, Simelius was the guest of Soviet Marshal Zakharov.

The Soviet press announced that the chairman of the All-Union Trade Chamber, Nesterenko is in Helsinki.

England. Lord Atlee led a delegation of parliamentarians which arrived in Moscow on October 5. According to the British Embassy here, the delegation reportedly confined itself to sightseeing and did not engage in any political discussions with ranking Soviet officials.

Cuba. The Cuban Minister of Labor, Martinez Sanchez, arrived on October 11 on the invitation of the Soviet State Committee of the Council of Ministers.

INTERNAL - POLITICAL

5. LEADERSHIP: SPECULATION ON TOP-LEVEL CHANGES. Moscow's diplomats and correspondents, and those few Soviet citizens authorized to maintain contact with them, are engaged, on the eve of the XXII CPSU Congress, in speculation about the changes it will produce in the Party leadership. Out of this welter of rumor, informed guesses, and positive prediction, the following consensus has developed.

(a) The Congress, the Central Committee it will elect, and the Central Committee plenum which, following its close, will constitute the new Presidium and other central Party bodies, are unlikely to produce any spectacular surprises. Most of the middle-level changes have already been accomplished by the process of piecemeal replacement, which began just before the January, 1961, plenum and culminated in the republic congresses.

[redacted]

(b) ARISTOV, KUUSINEN, and SHVERNIK seem destined to be dropped as full members of the Presidium, the latter two joining VOROSHILOV as Soviet elder statesmen. Among those who will replace them are G. I. VOROBYOV and V. V. GRISHIN (WEEKA No. 38, September 22, 1961). Additionally, F. IL'ICHEV, who has had long service as Chief Editor of Pravda and Chief of the Central Committee's Agitprop section, and P. A. SATYUKOV, the current Chief Editor of Pravda, appear likely contenders for at least candidate-membership in the new Presidium (Despatch No. 316, October 12, 1961).

(c) The Congress itself will be devoted primarily to summing up and eulogizing progress made during the Khrushchev years and to sketching, in the rather hazy terms of the Draft Program, perspectives for the future. It will have a predominant domestic-political theme, in keeping with its designation as the "Congress of the Builders of Communism" (in one country), although Khrushchev may be expected to use the platform it provides for a re-enunciation of current Soviet foreign-policy goals.

6. KHRUSHCHEV AND KHRUSHCHEVISM. With the approach of October 17, the date of the convening of the XXII CPSU Congress, laudatory references to Khrushchev have multiplied, together with repeated references to the evils of the "cult of personality."

In an article on the development of Soviet atomic submarines, Marshal ZHUKOV is depicted as having opposed the adoption of modern weapons. Zhukov is also said to have held that the Navy was good for nothing but ceremonial occasions (an opinion actually expressed once by Khrushchev himself). Only the personal and wise intervention of Khrushchev saved the Soviet Navy and resulted in the decision to produce atomic submarines. "That is why our sailors call Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev the father of the atomic fleet" (Izvestiya, October 9).

In an article in Pravda (also October 9, 1961), Marshal GOLIKOV gives Khrushchev the credit for creating Soviet land-based rocket forces, "the principal arm of our military forces."

In the third volume of "The History of the Great Fatherland War of the Soviet Union -- 1941-1945", which went on sale in Moscow bookstores this week, the name of Khrushchev leads all the rest. He is referred to 41 times (runner-up is A. HITLER, with 36 references).

And at the republic Party congresses, tribute to Khrushchev was a staple of the reports read by First Secretaries. In the Ukraine, for example, PODGORNYY leaned heavily throughout his speech on the name of the All-Union First Secretary.

Two of the more striking illustrations of this moderate, but marked, rise in the cult of Khrushchev in the pre-Congress days occurred in Esthonia and Uzbekistan.

Esthonia: "The Communists of Esthonia, the entire Esthonian people, nourish a deep respect, sincere love, and gratitude for you, dear Nikita Sergeyevich, and highly value your titanic efforts for the welfare of the Soviet people, for the good of peace for the whole earth. For all of us, you embody the perfect example of Leninist deeds -- of how one should love the people and serve them!

"Our devotion and support is always with you, dear Nikita Sergeyevich!" (Sovetskaya Estoniya, October 1, 1961).

7. Uzbekistan: "In your face, dear Nikita Sergeyevich, the Soviet people and workers of the whole world see a true pupil of Lenin, a talented organizer, a distinguished leader of the Communist Party and Soviet State, and a learned theoretician and guide for the contemporary international Communist and Worker's movements. We deeply value your tireless efforts, directed towards the further strengthening of the might of our great homeland" (Pravda Vostoka, September 28, 1961).

8. "Anti-Party Group" Recalled in Propaganda On the Taming of the Virgin Lands. The "taming" of 100 million acres of fallow and new lands is hailed as "an act of great revolutionary significance" in a lead editorial of Pravda (October 11), in an issue that devotes two full pages to developments in the Virgin Lands over the past six years. Contrasting the tent cities of 1954 with today's facilities, Pravda projects an image of unqualified success in the campaign to assimilate the new lands. Figures are given to show that, from 1954 to 1960, 32 million (old) rubles profit was earned for the State after allowing for investment costs. This seems to indicate that about $500 was invested for each acre made productive.

That opposition to the Virgin Lands program was tantamount to opposing Khrushchev is seen in the editorial's remarks concerning the "anti-Party group." "Life has mocked the sceptics who came out against the Party's policy of developing new lands. The disgraceful failure of the anti-Party group, which was exposed and routed by the Central Committee of the CPSU and which was cast aside by the Party and people, has become clear to all." Thus, the entire group is now branded as having opposed Khrushchev's Virgin Lands policy, although only V. M. MOLOTOV was accused of this "crime" at the June, 1957, Central Committee Plenum.

Further evidence of the steady guidance Soviet agriculture receives from Khrushchev's hand is seen in transfer of the RSFSR Ministry of Agriculture lock, stock, and barrel to the country to be "close to the land", long a Khrushchev advocacy (Despatch 329, October 13, 1961).

9. Further Legislation Against Drunks. For the third time in six months, legislation has been enacted in the RSFSR to provide the legal basis for a crack-down on drunks and drunkenness. By a decree of October 5, the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet passed a law providing for suspension of a driver's license if he is caught driving while drunk. If the offense is repeated within three years, the right to drive will be suspended for up to three years.

The new law is another step in the regime's attempt to crack down on drunkenness in all forms by stiffer penalties. A law increasing penalties for producing home brew (Despatch 772, May 12, 1961) and a law permitting "parasites", many of whom are merely drinks, to be banished (Despatch 762, May 9, 1961), are other recent examples of laws authorizing higher penalties.

10. TANNU-TUVA BECOMES THE SIXTEENTH AUTONOMOUS SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC On October 11, 1922, the "independence" of the Tuva People's Republic (Tannu-Tuva) was proclaimed. On October 11, 1944, by "popular demand", the Republic was taken into the RSFSR as an Autonomous Oblast. It was therefore fitting that, on October 11, 1961, Pravda should publish a decree confirming the establishment of the Tuva Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. The citizens of the new ASSR were thus enabled to celebrate their elevated status on October 11, the date on which everything seems to happen in Tannu-Tuva.

The reasons for this change in the status of the area are not known. Among them may be the desire to create a more elaborate administrative apparatus in order to exploit the region's rich mineral deposits (including, according to rumor, uranium).

11. "UNITY OF COMMAND": THE PARTY SUPREME IN THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES. Continuing a series of articles by various military men, begun by Defense Minister R. Ya. MALINOVSKIY (WEEKA No. 37, September 15), Marshal Golikov, Chief of the Main Political Administration of the Soviet Army and Navy, has written an article entitled, "The Holy Duty of Army Communists" (Pravda, October 9). The article emphasizes the role of the Communist officer in the armed forces, gives the impression that Party organs at every level in the armed forces enjoy increasing prestige, and, in general, seems to justify the impression that Golikov's administration was up-graded around the time of his promotion from (political) general to marshal last July. An absolute majority of all ranks of the Armed Forces, Golikov claims, are now members of the Komsomol.

Golikov's major theme is that there are no conflicts of interest between dutiful soldiers and Communists. When an officer is sought for a responsible command position, he says, ample officers who are also Party members can be found to fill the post.

MILITARY - Negative

For the Charge d'Affairs a.i.

Boris H. Klosson

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